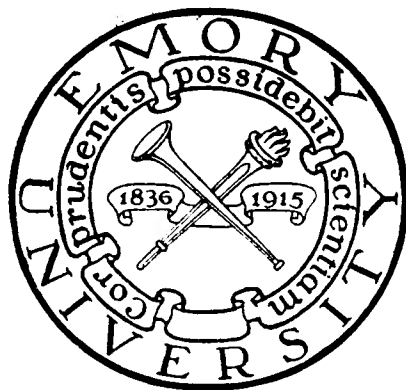


AN EYEWITNESS
TO
THE DARK DAYS OF 1861-65
by
N.J. Hampton

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N. J. HAMPTON AT FIFTY-THREE.

AN EYEWITNESS
TO
THE DARK DAYS OF 1861-65;

OR,
A PRIVATE SOLDIER'S ADVENTURES AND
HARDSHIPS DURING THE WAR.

BY N. J. HAMPTON.



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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.	PAGE
SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR—ENLIST- MENT—FIRST ARMY SERVICE, ETC.	5
CHAPTER II.	
BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON.	8
CHAPTER III.	
ON TO CAMP BUTLER PRISON.	12
CHAPTER IV.	
THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.	20
CHAPTER V.	
THE BLOODY BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO. ..	22
CHAPTER VI.	
BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA..	29
CHAPTER VII.	
ON LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN	36
CHAPTER VIII.	
MISSIONARY RIDGE AND THE FIGHT AT ROCKY FACE ..	39
CHAPTER IX.	
RACING FOR RESACA.....	44
CHAPTER X.	
KENNESAW MOUNTAIN.....	51
CHAPTER XI.	
THE RETREAT CONTINUED	56
CHAPTER XII.	
CARRIED TO CAMP CHASE.....	63
LETTERS	76

AN EYEWITNESS.

CHAPTER I.

SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR— ENLISTMENT—FIRST ARMY SERVICE, ETC.

I WAS born at Tyree Springs, Sumner County, Tenn., December 6, 1844. From my earliest recollection I had a great fondness for listening to the stories told by my father of the great wars in which our country had been engaged, and from these stories and the small advantages I had of books I formed a great admiration for heroes and heroic deeds. My first ambition was to serve my native State as a soldier. When the war broke out between the States, on hearing the first drum tap calling for volunteers, I decided to become a soldier for the Confederacy; and, being young (under seventeen years), I ran away from home and joined Capt. Buck Joyner's company as a private, and was sworn into the service of the Confederacy by that hero of heroes, the glorious Isham G. Harris, on the 22d day of May, 1861.

After being sworn in, our company went to Camp Trousdale, near Fountain Head, Sumner County, Tenn., and there was organized into the Eighteenth Tennessee regiment of infantry as

Company B, our colonel being J. B. Palmer, of Murfreesboro, Tenn. Here we went into camp and drew our first arms, which were old flintlock muskets. Then we thought we were indeed warriors, and here we ate our "white bread."

Our first move on leaving Camp Trousdale was to Bowling Green, Ky., after the blockade had been raised between Trousdale and Bowling Green. On our way to Bowling Green we came near having a serious accident. Our train could not accommodate so many men inside the coaches, so some had to perch themselves on top. We met a passenger train in a curve, which so frightened us that some of our men fell off and several lost their muskets. I was one of the men on top, but I managed to hold on to my gun. Fortunately there were none hurt. After reaching Bowling Green we built fortifications on Mullgoe's and Vinegar Hills. We were then moved to Greenville, Ky., where there was a small garrison of bluecoats. Just as we were getting in sight of the garrison they left. Upon our arrival we found only a Union flag, of which we took possession. At that time our brigade was composed of the Eighteenth, Third, Twenty-Sixth, and Thirty-Second Tennessee and the glorious old Second Kentucky, commanded by Brig. Gen. S. C. Buckner, of Kentucky. Our battery was commanded by Capt. James Porter. My regiment numbered one thousand young men, and at this time (1898) only sixty-five of us survive, and those few are nearly

all beginning to get feeble with age. During this first raid we began to experience some of the hardships of war. We were out ten days on three days' rations, and were compelled to subsist on green pumpkins and peas. On one day we did without water from daybreak until nine o'clock at night, the day being very hot and I suffering greatly with earache. From that place we were ordered back to Bowling Green, and remained there until the middle of January. From Bowling Green we were ordered to Russellville, Ky., and there camped a few weeks. There we began grumbling, thinking the war would be over before we were engaged in a battle. But we were soon to experience war in its awful reality. We were ordered to Fort Donelson.

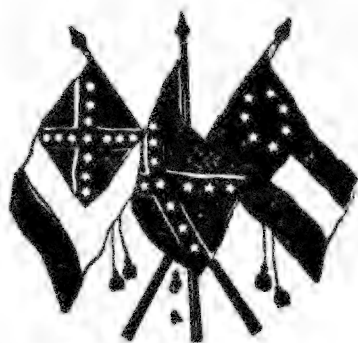


CHAPTER II.

BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON.

WE then took cars for Clarksville on a cold sleety day, being perched upon a box car. At Clarksville we took a boat for Fort Donelson. The name of the boat was the "Runion." We landed at Fort Donelson about dark, and being so late we did not pitch our tents that night, but stayed with our friends. I stayed with Capt. May, a cousin of mine of the Thirtieth Tennessee Regiment. The next day our company was drilled in a bayonet exercise by Lieut. Gleaves. You will remember that just a few days previous to this Fort Henry had fallen into the hands of the Federals. While we were drilling our bayonet drill we looked up on a hillside, about three-quarters of a mile distant, and there, behold, we saw a line of battle of Yankees; and now trouble began.

The first attack on the fort was made about February 13, 1862. The first night of the engagement William Tennon and myself were detailed as pickets from our company, and stood upon the breastworks within two hundred yards of the enemy. Our regiment lay between the river and Fort Henry roads, a distance of five hundred yards. A portion of Porter's Battery was occupying the road. One gun, commanded by Serg. Arch



OUR FLAGS.



N. J. HAMPTON AT SIXTEEN.

Steward, was planted in the road between two logs which formed a V. During the night a Federal battery was planted two hundred yards in front of Steward's gun. The next morning about daybreak they opened fire upon Steward's gun. A few shots were returned by the Confederate battery, and the Federal battery soon limbered up and retreated. The Confederate battery suffered greatly from sharpshooters the rest of the day. The Confederate battery was supported by the Eighteenth Tennessee and the Second Kentucky. Between three and four o'clock the Federals made a desperate charge upon the Eighteenth Tennessee Regiment. Our line of battle being in a curve, the battery on our left turned their guns and shot down our lines with grapeshot and canister. This drove the Federals back in great confusion.

The next day the gunboats made an attack, doing very little damage. They had four gunboats, and made a second attack upon us. We crippled one of the boats and shot the smokestacks off another, and they retreated, disappearing beyond a curve in the river. We did this with a sixty and an eighty pound gun. The next morning we were ordered back to Dover to reënforce the left wing of our army. There we engaged in a lively battle until three o'clock in the afternoon. The Tenth Tennessee charged out of their works, and were repulsed. Our regiment charged out also, and gave back on account of superior numbers.

We were then ordered about a half mile to our right by Gen. Floyd. A Federal battery had been firing, but had ceased and was hidden in the bushes. Gen. Floyd ordered Col. Palmer to go up and bring that battery away, the Colonel thinking the battery was silenced. He threw our men in double column at half distance, making our lines ten men deep. To our surprise, when we had advanced to within about thirty yards of the battery they opened fire upon us with grape-shot and canister. We lay down in the snow, and those balls cut the bushes from over us. If I had been a mole, I should have gone into the ground instead of the snow. But fortunately for us, Gen. Forrest's cavalry drew the attention of the enemy to the right of their rear, and the Federal battery was taken. After this we were ordered back to our old position in line of battle on the right. About the time we arrived at our former position the Federals made a desperate charge upon us, and about four o'clock the Second Kentucky, being on our right, next to the river, was compelled to fall out of their ditches on account of the Federals coming with such force against them. This compelled us to fall out of our ditches also, and we made a right oblique and, with the old flintlock muskets, fought them from behind our own works, about one hundred and thirty-five yards away. The Second Kentucky's loss was very heavy; ours not so great. Every time I fired my gun I knew it, for, being heavily loaded with three

buckshot; an ounce ball, and a large quantity of powder, almost every shot knocked me down. Porter's battery of six pieces made a right oblique fire upon the Federals. This engagement was kept up until about sundown. Gen. Buckner then ordered us to cease firing.

About ten o'clock that night we were ordered back to Dover by Gens. Floyd and Pillow. Upon our arrival there were two boats loaded with soldiers headed for Nashville, and we had no transportation. A council of war was held by Gens. Buckner, Pillow, and Floyd, and the command was turned over to Gen. Buckner. We were then marched back to our former position, where we were ordered to stack arms for surrender. At one o'clock a white flag was raised, Gen. Buckner seeing that there was no chance for success in the battle with the small command at his disposal. Gen. Smith, of Illinois, was the enemy's division commander. Our flag, for some reason, was not received. Next morning at seven o'clock a detail of twelve men was sent under a flag of truce to the enemy's lines to inform them of our surrender. I suppose they thought the hollows were packed with Johnnies.

During those days we had plenty to eat, but suffered greatly from cold, the mercury being down to zero.

CHAPTER III.

ON TO CAMP BUTLER PRISON.

IN the evening we were marched to the whar and took boats for St. Louis, on our way to prison but unfortunately for us the boats were not to leave until the next morning. We were compelled to lay down to sleep in mud ankle-deep. The next morning I was awakened by some relatives of mine, and took breakfast with them by a log hearth fire. After breakfast we boarded the boats for prison, going up the Mississippi River as far as twenty-five miles above St. Louis, to a little town called Alton, Ill. There we boarded trains for Springfield, Ill., to Camp Butler. Our officers went to Camp Douglas, and we never saw them any more until we were exchanged. We landed at the prison about 3 A.M. There we ate our first meal in the Union about nine o'clock that morning. We remained at Camp Butler until August. We were treated very well here, it being the beginning of the war. Our prison life here was nothing to compare to that of Camp Chase, as you will see farther on. Camp Butler was a great place for wild salad, which we gathered for food. Maj. Fawnly, who was in command at the prison at that time, frequently took a hundred of us at a time to pick salad. He called us his sheep. H



GEN. J. B. PALMER.

treated us better than a former commander by the name of Morris, who was very ill and crabbed. We called him the old "Billy Goat." Several of us had money, which had been sent to us from our friends; but Col. Morris would not let us have more than one dollar at a time, fearing we would bribe a guard and escape. Several of our boys went to the office one morning to draw some money to buy postage stamps and tobacco. They entered the office with their caps on, while I remained outside the door. Col. Morris was so angry at this lack of courtesy that he stamped like an old billy goat, and drove them from the office. This frightened me very much, although I summoned up courage to go in, for I was greatly in need of tobacco. Entering the office, I raised my cap and saluted the Colonel. He then asked, "Young man, what will you have?" I requested him to let me have one dollar, and he answered saying: "Yes, young man, I'll let you have five of them since you have acted as a soldier should when those scoundrels came in here and showed me no respect." He then gave me a five-dollar bill.

While we were in prison here five hundred of my comrades died, and one poor fellow was murdered. I knew the unfortunate young man well; his name was Gray, and he was a member of the Thirtieth Tennessee Volunteers. He was shot by a little old light-complexioned tin soldier—a regular coward. He was sitting on the steps of the barracks door washing his feet, after which he raised

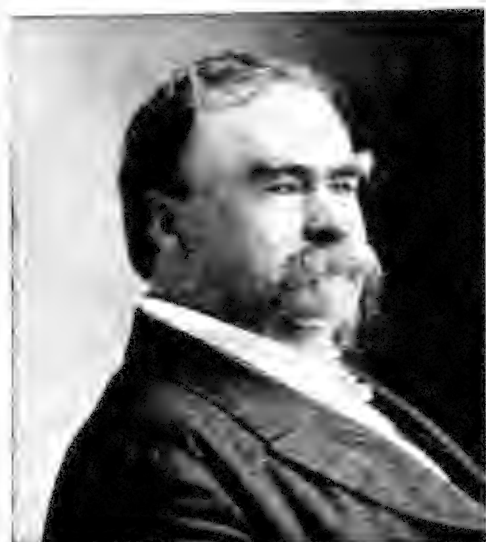
up and dashed the water out; just as he did so, this coward fired his gun. The poor fellow fell, but lingered till the next day, when he died. He was murdered for nothing in the world, no cause whatever.

I will here give you a plan of the prison, which covered about eight acres of land walled in with a twelve or fourteen foot fence. On the east were barracks numbering about twenty; on the west side there were not so many barracks as on the east, and these were occupied by the Federal garrison and guards. The barracks were as high as three bunks. At first we were guarded by the Twelfth Illinois Cavalry. There was a partition guard between us and the Federals, and a strong guard around our part of the prison. When there was any work or cleaning up to be done the Federals detailed our boys. This is the way they detailed us: They would call us out of the barracks and form us into line, and an officer would snatch or grab at us and say: "You! and you! and you!" I shall never forget the day they detailed a comrade and myself to clean out an old well. We were afraid of damp in the well, so we lit a bunch of shucks and threw them in; yet I was afraid to go down first, so I sent my comrade. He dipped up several buckets of mud, and then it came my time to go down; so I windlassed him up, and went down. I dipped up about a half bucketful of mud, and shouted: "All up; pull me out!" I know the mud was knee-deep. The

well was so deep that when I looked up I saw the stars, and I did not like the idea of staying down there. This was on the Yankees' side of the prison. Another little incident I shall never forget was on my return to the prison from the well cleaning, when I stopped at a Yankee pit that was used by the army. There was about a dozen Yankees there at the time, and one of them fell into the pit up to his eyes. While the poor fellow was paddling between life and death, the rest of the men were dodging about in their fright like chickens with their heads cut off. I said to his friends: "For God's sake don't let the man drown; throw him that piece of scantling, and help to pull him out!" When he came out he was snorting like an old steer with his nose daubed with mud, and was blowing like a whale in the mighty deep.

Our prison was visited frequently by the ladies of that community, who would come as near as the guard line and look over at us. Among them was an old lady who wore spectacles. She lifted up her glasses and exclaimed: "Law me, those men are just like our men; they told me that Rebels had horns!" You can imagine there was a yell from our boys.

Another incident: There was a little frisky Yankee sergeant who came to our barracks every morning to wake us up for roll call and to see if any had escaped during the night. An Irishman occupied the third bunk, which was opposite



GEN. W. H. JACKSON.

mine. He was so large that his foot hung out over the bunk. The little frisky sergeant had a habit of shouting: "Get up! get up! get up!" One morning he came in as usual, and seized the big Irishman by the foot and jerked him. The Irishman reached over, grabbed his boot, and threw it at the sergeant, but he dodged it. Then the Yankee fired two shots at him with a little old pepper box pistol, but missed him. After the shots were fired the coward wheeled around and fled from the barracks, shouting "Murder! murder!" every breath he drew. As he ran he dropped his cap, and would not come back for it himself, but sent an officer and six men. The officer told the Irishman that he was going to put him in the guardhouse. The Irishman said: "No you won't, I'm a Canadian: and if you do, I'll just write a letter over to the old lady." Then they left him unmolested. And that put a stop to the little frisky's coming in there.

Sometime during our stay at this prison two of the soldiers, J. L. Dismukes and Jesse Crossway, escaped and made their way to Dixie, and again joined the Southern army. At that time we were allowed to take a guard and go out as far as a mile or so. We would gather up our canteens, get a guard, and go out for buttermilk. There was a distillery a mile or two away, and we would give the guard a half dollar to take us there. We would get only enough buttermilk to smear on the outside of our canteens, which were filled with whis-

ky. I have done this so many times that I was called the "traveling grocery." I sold my liquor for five cents a snuffbox full. I had to keep it smuggled from the Yankees, so I carried my bottle in my bosom and the box in my pocket.

Another incident: There was a little fellow named Morgan who stayed in Barrack No. 18 with me. He found an old, worn-out Yankee uniform and an old musket without any lock. He then took five prisoners and passed them out by the guards. They succeeded in getting as far as Elk River, but were captured there and all six of them returned to prison. The oath and exchange were gotten up about the 1st of August, 1862. The oath always came to us just before an exchange. There were two forms of oath. One was the oath of allegiance to the United States government; the other was an oath to go on exchange. Here some fun began. Some of the Confederate prisoners took the oath of allegiance and some the oath to go on exchange. Those taking the oath of allegiance would cross over on the Yankee side from one to a dozen at a time. These fellows we called goats, and those taking the exchange oath were called sheep. I was one of the sheep. Every time any of the goats jumped the fence to the Yankee side, we would bleat like genuine sheep, and say we were separating the sheep from the goats. We kept up such a racket, and so annoyed the Yankees that they formed a line of battle and threatened to fire on us. Then we became quiet.

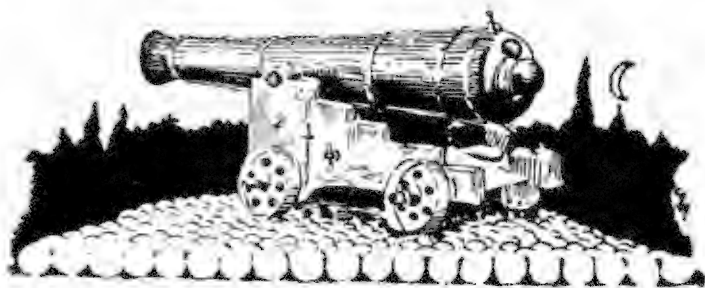
CHAPTER IV

THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.

AT the prison we were put on board a train for Alton, Ill. At that place we took a boat for Vicksburg to be exchanged. We traveled as far as Cairo, and stopped there to await the arrival of comrades from other prisons, so that a fleet could be formed. When they arrived the fleet was formed, being made up of seven transports and one gunboat. We then went down the Mississippi River under a flag of truce to Vicksburg. During this voyage we were sixteen days on the river, traveling only in the daytime, the Yankees fearing we might be fired on at night by Confederates.

I shall never forget when the boat I was on stopped for fuel. The rest of the fleet had gone ahead of us. Just about the time the fellow received pay for his wood he came to the bank of the river and told the Yankees that a line of Confederates was coming toward the river. He did this to frighten them away from his wood. This information caused a tumult on board the boat, and as soon as possible they were hurriedly making their way down the river to avert trouble. The boat was in a tremble, and her speed was fearful until we overtook the rest of the fleet. They then anchored in the middle of the river. The next day we went rejoicing on our way toward Dixie.

We landed at the mouth of the Yazoo River, which was about as far as the Confederates would allow the Federal boats to go. There we were transported to our boats, and met our officers who surrendered with us at Fort Donelson. You may imagine the merry hand shaking and hearty greeting. We remained a week at Vicksburg, eating good old Confederate barbecue and listening to that entrancing tune, "Dixie." We were then ordered to Jackson, Miss., and there were re-organized, making out three years' volunteer service.



CHAPTER V

THE BLOODY BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO.

WE were ordered from Jackson, Miss., to Mobile, Ala., where we crossed Mobile Bay and took the train for Montgomery. We then went to Atlanta, Ga.; from Atlanta to Chattanooga, Tenn., and then to Knoxville, where we went into camp for a few weeks. There we drew our new uniforms of gray, and also new arms—Richmond rifles with saber bayonets—which were far superior to our old flintlock muskets. From here we were ordered back to Chattanooga, then to Bridgeport, Ala., and from Bridgeport to Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Our regiment was the first infantry to arrive at Murfreesboro. At Bridgeport the bridges were destroyed, so we were ferried across the river. We managed, also, to ferry a few box cars and a locomotive engine. I was guard on the boat at that time. We made up a train and were off for Murfreesboro. On our arrival we went into camp southwest of the railroad bridge, where we remained until we were ordered to cook two days' rations and move to Hartsville to reënforce Gen. John H. Morgan, who had shelled and bombed Hartsville until a garrison of twenty-two hundred Yankees had surrendered to him. Our regiment did not get any farther than Blackshop. We took charge

of the prisoners at Blackshop, and remained there two or three days, and the prisoners were paroled. We then returned to our old camp ground at Murfreesboro.

The bloody battle of Murfreesboro was drawing near. About the 27th of December, 1862, we were ordered into line of battle about three miles north of Murfreesboro. I shall never forget the Sunday morning we were forming in line, stepping to the familiar tune of the "Mocking Bird." Here we heard the roaring of musketry and the booming of cannons on each side. It seemed as if the earth was giving way or quivering like a leaf. Our division was on the right wing of the Confederate army, commanded by Gen. John C. Breckinridge; and our brigade, on the right of the division, was commanded by Gen. John C. Brown, of Tennessee. Our brigade was composed of the Third, Eighteenth, Twenty-Sixth, Thirty-Second, and Forty-Fifth Tennessee Regiments. At that time the glorious old Eighteenth, which never lost a step when going into battle, was commanded by Gen. J. B. Palmer. The principal fighting done the first two or three days was on the left and center of our army. About the time Gen. Rains was killed our brigade was ordered to the left, and we forded Stone's River, crossing on foot just below the railroad bridge. The bank was so steep and slippery that I slipped backward into the water up to my waist, though I managed to get out and fall in line again; and I jumped up, hallooed,

and popped my heels together. There was a new recruit, by the name of Loss Bowers, in my company, and he told me that he never could have crossed the river if he had not looked up and seen me on the bank knocking my heels together. He had never been in battle, but I had; and when I hallooed, he took courage and crossed over. During the crossing of the river grapeshot and bombshells were falling fast about us. We marched a left oblique west of the railroad. A battery of six cannons, situated on a small knoll in the edge of some cedar growth, were playing on us. There was an officer watching us, who said that we could lie down and get up without losing a step. Just before we arrived the Federal battery limbered up and retreated. A little after dark we had the right wing of the Federal army lapped near about upon its left. Here we saw an extremely pitiful sight of death and destruction—horses shot down, ambulances turned upside down—mingled with groans of dying men of both armies. Our regiment drew a barrel of whisky that night, and I took a canteen of it and ventured out between the two hostile armies and ministered to the wounded and dying men. The next morning just at daybreak we were ordered back to our old position on the right, and there we lay all day long, doing no fighting until the next day. The next evening came that fearfully bloody charge of Breckinridge. It seemed that the Federals had massed their artillery on the east, where the national cem-



GEN. JOHN L. BROWN.

etry now is. Gen. Breckinridge was ordered by Gen. Bragg to make a charge with his division, and we were moved down on the right into a small ravine by an old cotton gin. By this time the Federals had crossed the river and formed three lines of battle between us and that point. We were ordered to stand in line until the signal gun was fired, which was between three and four o'clock in the evening of January 2, 1863, and then the bloody charge began. When the signal gun fired we marched forward, elbow to elbow, into the very jaws of death. We were marching in a cornfield up a western slope. Within a hundred yards of the enemy was an old fence, behind which their skirmishers were hidden. They fired upon our regiment, and killed two men in my company. They were James Hatch and William Cole. There were no words spoken save by the officers, which were: "Steady, men! close up!" By this time we had marched close to the enemy's lines. Just over the crest of a hill, about fifteen steps in front of us, they were lying down in a line of battle. The enemy's colonel went galloping down their lines at a lightning speed, shouting: "Attention, battalion! fix bayonets!" Just as they raised upon their knees to fix bayonets, we fired a volume of musketry into them. I will venture to say that one-third of them were killed, wounded, or captured. We gave the Rebel yell, kept forward, and ran them into the second line, which was near the river. Owing to a curve in

the river, our brigade struck it first; and the Federal lines overlapped us on the right, capturing two pieces of our artillery. We had all of them in the river at once, and poured hot shot into them. On the right of our brigade was the Third Tennessee. I saw the flag bearer of this regiment fall, but he still held on to his colors; and as he lay on his back he waved them, saying: " Rally on your colors here, boys' "

The Federal lines by that time had crossed the river. They could not use their artillery until they had crossed; then they opened upon us with fifty pieces of grape and canister, besides the musketry. This charge lasted about twenty-five minutes. Our men were mown down until there were gaps left of about twenty steps. I myself shot thirty-four cartridges in that charge. We were compelled to fall back, and that gave the enemy a chance to take good aim at us.

During this charge our colonel, J. B. Palmer, was wounded three times, three flag bearers shot down, twenty-two bullet holes shot in the banner, and a flagstaff cut half in two. That was an awful sight to witness. I can't tell it one-half as bad as it was. We fell back a little beyond where we started the charge. I was detailed as a sharpshooter the following morning, and shot at the enemy from behind a large oak tree. They had possession of the old cotton gin that day, we having had it the day before.

Gen. Bragg thought the enemy was reënforcing,

and we were ordered in about eleven o'clock, retreating to Wartrace; and from there to Tullahoma, remaining there until late in the spring. Then Rosecrans, with his mighty army, advanced upon us; so we were compelled to retreat to Chattanooga, going over the Cumberland Mountains by Sewanee. Our brigade was left ten miles above Chattanooga, at a place called Civilies Ford. We remained there quite a while. At that place the Yankee pickets fired upon us several times. Very soon we gave up Chattanooga to the Yankees. Our division was then ordered to McLemore's Cove, and there we had a lively fight for a whole day with Gen. Joe Hooker's Corps. We came very near capturing them. They were forced to fall back over the mountain, it being nine o'clock that night when they disappeared. Then the bloody battle of Chickamauga was drawing near.



CHAPTER VI.

BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA.

FROM McLemore's Cove we marched to a little town called Jasper. There we were ordered to cook three days' rations. I was one of the cooks, and we cooked all night. Next morning at eight o'clock we formed line, and orders were read from Gen. Braxton Bragg, commander in chief of the Army of Tennessee. Our orders were that we would turn on the enemy and beat them back from our soil. This was Friday, September 18, 1863. Now began the fearful and bloody battle of Chickamauga.

At sundown that day we reached Chickamauga Creek, a place I shall never forget. About dark a few cannons were fired from the Federal side. Our company was in line of battle near a residence, the occupants being unknown to me. We were resting over a sweet potato patch, and the boys began to grabble for potatoes. Very soon the family left the house, and several young ladies—members of the family—came through our lines. One of my comrades said: "Ladies, the boys are grabbling your potatoes." They replied: "Our boys and our potatoes; that's all right." Our regiment was moved up and down the banks of Chickamauga Creek all night long, and I shall

never forget the voice of Lieut. Col. Butler, who was in charge of the regiment that night. About sunrise next morning, September 19, we were ordered forward, wading the creek, which was over knee-deep. In front of us was a field, in which we halted, and, finding some good, dry fence rails, built us a fire. About the time we built the fire we were ordered forward into a woods of heavy pine timber. There was considerable firing on our right from Cheatham's Division, but none in front of us at that time.

My three days' rations gave out in twenty-four hours, as I was a hearty eater. For a nickname my comrades called me "Long Hungry." One of my comrades, Phene Harrison, looked up at me and said: "Long Hungry, have you got anything to eat?" I said, "No, Phene; not a bite." He then said: "I have one biscuit and one potato, and will divide with you, for you are too good a soldier to go hungry." He broke the potato that was grabbed the night before, cut the biscuit in half and handed me my share, saying sadly: "Eat, drink, and be merry to-day, for to-morrow we may die."

It was a beautiful, clear day, and very soon we were ordered to our right in double-quick through the smoke of powder, and charged a battery supported heavily by infantry. Some of us lay our hands on the artillery, and the cannoneers fought at us with their sabers. The poor fellow who divided his biscuit and potato with me was killed.

Joe Luton, Steve Bowers, and a man by the name of Croxton, all members of my company, were wounded. We were so close to the cannons that we were burned by the powder. One poor fellow standing within ten steps of the cannon got his head shot off, his brains and hair falling on my left shoulder. We were repulsed, falling back about one hundred yards from their battery.

We formed into two lines and made another charge, a portion of Longstreet's Corps supporting us. There was such a volume of smoke that we could not distinguish the enemy from our own men ten steps away. Longstreet's Corps made a right flank movement on the battery and infantry, and our regiment, thinking they were our enemies, fired a volley into them, killing and wounding thirty or forty of our own men. We then turned our volley, made a left oblique, with a rebel yell, and took the battery.

About dark the firing began to calm, and from then until daylight we lay in line of battle intermingled with the dead and wounded. We were within three hundred yards of the enemy's lines, and we imagined from the dull rattling of wagons that they were massing artillery a little to the left of Snodgrass Hill. That night about twelve o'clock it began to get cold and frosty. While we were laying among the dead some of the boys smoked, and every time a match was lighted the Federals would fire a volley into us with musketry or grape-shot. My teeth chattered so that I fancied I was

playing "Dixie," and I would have played "Yankee Doodle" if it would have stopped the firing.

Sunday morning, the 20th, just at daybreak, we were ordered about a half mile to our right, and were formed in a line of battle, supported by a portion of Longstreet's Corps. There we lay, within thirty yards of the Yankee skirmishers, waiting for a signal gun to fire a general charge. About eight o'clock there was some heavy cannonading from the enemy's side. A cannon ball passed through a large pine tree and shivered off a piece which struck me on the back while I was lying down. That, however, did not keep me from fighting.

Now came death and destruction. About eight forty o'clock our signal gun was fired for the general charge, and the whole army, left, right, and center, moved at once. Our regiment marched off like clock work, all elbow to elbow, until we came to a small field where there was an old house. This was a little to the left of Snodgrass Hill. We came in contact with about thirty pieces of artillery, heavily supported by infantry. We were within forty steps of the battery. They threw such heavy volleys of musketry, grapeshot, and shells that we were compelled to fall back a few hundred yards. At that time our sergeant, Ed Moore, was killed, and several others of my company wounded.

Gen. Hood's corps swung around to our left, and we re-formed. Such a roar of musketry and



JOHN S. B. HUGNER.

artillery for about six hours was never known or heard before. The woods caught fire, burning our wounded men before we could take them up. No doubt many of them would have been alive to-day had it not been for that fire. Their loaded guns being discharged by the fire made it seem as if there was a battle behind us. I have seen numbers of wounded soldiers who in some way would get a stick or dead limb, and in the attempt to save their lives would rake the ground around them perfectly clean so the fire could not reach them, and even after their hard struggles, many of them were scorched to death with the sticks in their hands. This was one of the most terrible sights man ever witnessed.

At three o'clock in the evening we were carrying the enemy before us as chaff before the wind. The center, right, and left were giving back, and we were pursuing. Our brigade came in contact with a Federal brigade, and for about two and a half hours we were in close quarters. In the meantime I was detailed to go back to Chickamauga Creek with a load of canteens to supply the company with water. When I returned to my lines there was some heavy firing of artillery by the enemy from Snodgrass Hill, the last place they made a stand. I heard a cannon ball forcing its way through the pine trees as though it had lost its power, and was expecting every instant to be hit by it, as it seemed to be coming toward me. But a young man on my right became its victim. It

struck his left leg just below the knee, and completely crushed it. The blood flowed rapidly. I put down my canteens, and with my pocket handkerchief bound his wound as best I could. I shall never forget that young man's looks. It seemed that death was on every side.

We then closed up on that Federal brigade and commanded them to surrender. We knew that at that time their army was stampeded and falling back toward Chattanooga. The entire brigade surrendered to us. They were still occupying Snodgrass Hill, and we were determined to dislodge them from that place. Cheatham's Division had swung their left wing around and dislodged them in every position. Our lines moved through the Kelley field and lost a great many men. In this fight Col. J. B. Palmer received another dangerous wound. We dislodged them and captured sixteen pieces of artillery. Then the whole army was in full retreat to Chattanooga. I was ordered out as picket in front of our batteries. John Coggins, one of my comrades, came by and took my canteen to Crawfish Creek to be filled with water, as I was exceedingly thirsty. I shall never forget that time.

The next day, the 21st, we lay on the battle field all day. Our army was too disabled to move. Only seven men in my company were able to bear arms, and I was one of the number, but the greater portion of our men were only slightly wounded.

CHAPTER VII.

ON LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.

THE next morning, September 22, we marched to Missionary Ridge, which was about eleven miles distant. In the afternoon our brigade marched through the valley between Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, within about two miles of Chattanooga. Then the Federal battery opened fire on us, and we lay there until dark, when we dropped back to Missionary Ridge, where we camped two months in plain view of the enemy. We put out pickets, commanding more than half the ground between Missionary Ridge and Chattanooga; also having possession of Lookout Mountain, and as far down the Tennessee River as Brown's Ferry, a distance of fifteen miles. In a few days no small arms were fired, and we became very friendly, exchanging tobacco for coffee, and reading each others' newspapers when the officers were not watching us. Our lines were only one hundred yards apart.

My time to go on picket duty came around about every five days. We were now getting short of provisions, and I was at times compelled to eat parched corn. This was caused by the bridges being washed away. A comrade named Jasper Starks and myself would watch Maj. Buck Joyner

feed his horse, and then we would make the horse divide with us. At night we parched our corn in the ashes and ate it. I remember a few days afterwards I was detailed to guard a pile of corn covered with a tarpaulin. Isaac Cunningham, one of my company, asked me if I would not let him have a sack of the corn. I told him I would if he would parch a haversackful for me. He said: "I'll do that, Hampton." About seven o'clock I saw some one coming and recognized him. I asked: "Who comes there?" The answer was: "Ike." I said, "All right, Ike;" then turned my back, and he took the corn. When I returned to the camp fire he had about a half bushel parched. I ate corn until I imagined I resembled a corncrib.

The battle of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain, or the battle above the clouds, was drawing near. Gen. Grant and Gen. Joe Hooker reënforced Sherman until they outnumbered us three to one. Very soon our regiment, the Eighteenth Tennessee, was ordered upon Lookout Mountain, near a gap known as Baldwin Gap, to guard that point. We had a good time there for about two weeks. We would get between the picket lines and bring in a skinned sheep, or go into a field and shell a sack of corn and have it ground at a little water mill located on a creek in the valley. We had a battery planted on the crest of Lookout Mountain, and I secured permission to go to the point. Some of the boys told me that

we were going to have some fun down in the valley, and they were then loading the cannon. A hundred or two of the Federals were just being relieved from picket duty, and we threw bombshells down on them. I have never seen such swift running as they did. They reminded me of a covey of partridges when fired into.



CHAPTER VIII.

MISSIONARY RIDGE AND THE FIGHT AT ROCKY FACE.

ON the night of November 25 the battle began. A Federal general, Joe Hooker, slipped in on our lines, and the result was a hard struggle for a while. We were then ordered from the gap back to Missionary Ridge, which was only three miles distant. The Federals now having possession of the point, we were forced to go down the southeastern slope of the mountain, a distance of about twenty-five miles. When we arrived at Missionary Ridge we were so fatigued from our journey that we were placed behind Gen. Day's brigade, of Georgia, to support them. This was near three o'clock in the afternoon. There was some terrible fighting on our right with Gen. Pat Cleburne's Division at that time. Very soon Gen. Bragg and his staff came galloping down our lines, carrying eight or ten colors which our men had captured from the enemy. I was a boy who wanted to see everything, so I got permission to stand on the breastworks and watch the Federals. While standing there I saw some terrible fighting. I saw a battery fire six guns as a signal for the whole Federal army to move toward us. As far as I could see there was nothing but solid lines of battle moving

toward us from every direction. It seemed as though the earth was on fire. The volumes of smoke formed dark, heavy clouds, and nothing could be heard but the roar of cannons and musketry, which echoed from hill to hill. The pitiful groans of wounded and dying men were lost in the din of battle. A portion of the hillside was literally covered with dead and wounded soldiers. On my right a caisson exploded, killing several men.

The bloody conflict was now drawing to a close. The Federals outnumbered us so greatly that they broke through Gen. Day's brigade, causing a hand-to-hand fight. We then moved right and left flank down the southern slope of Missionary Ridge, leaving behind our dead and wounded, and a great many pieces of artillery that we could not get out. Falling back to Dalton, Ga., we took up winter quarters. There we recruited up and strengthened our army to about forty-two thousand. We enjoyed ourselves and had plenty to eat. At this time Gen. Joseph E. Johnston was in command of the Army of Tennessee. We were reviewed every Sunday. Every man looked like a soldier, and did not deceive his looks.

While we were stationed at Dalton we had a sham battle, but we had most fun when we had a snowball battle. It was in the spring of 1864, about the 22d of March. A heavy snow had fallen during the night, and the hills and valleys were covered with the fluffy flakes. This snowball bat-

tle lasted all day, and the whole army became involved in it. It was great sport for us, as it recalled our boyhood days. Late in the evening I was knocked senseless with a snowball, but it was only for a short while, and in a few moments I began fighting again. Dark put an end to our sport, and we retired to our camps hungry and tired. It was not long until my appetite was satisfied, for I ate a hearty supper with Lieuts. Richard Smith and Sumner Cole, my messmates. When we were short of beef they could go to the commissary and buy it when a private could not, therefore I fared sumptuously

Now trouble soon begins. On the 25th of April our brigade was ordered northeast of Rocky Face Ridge, five or six miles from Dalton. During our encampment here orders were read on dress parade, on the 1st day of May, that the next day at eleven o'clock sixteen men would be shot for desertion. Some of them were from North Carolina, and some belonged to the same army corps of which I was a member. The evening before they were to be shot they were visited by their relatives, who cut locks of their hair, and wept mournfully over them. There was a row of sixteen stakes, and to each stake was tied a white handkerchief which was to be used to blindfold the condemned men. To the rear of each stake was a coffin, and in the center of the row was a hole for their burial. One of the sixteen died the night before the day of execution, and another was reprieved by peti-

tion two hours before he was to have been shot. Our brigade was formed in line to the rear of the provost guards to witness the awful scene. The remaining fourteen were marched out, each tied to his stake, and blindfolded. A prayer was offered by the chaplain, and a hymn sung, which was:

“When I am called to die,
Sing songs of holiness
To waft my soul on high;
And clasp my cold and icy hands
Upon my lifeless breast.”

They were shot without a command while this song was being sung. An officer in charge of the provost guards took a white handkerchief from his breast pocket as a signal to the guards to take aim, and as he threw his hand downward they fired. This was done in order not to let them know the moment they were to meet their Master. Three of the men, although wounded, did not fall, and a second volley was fired, the guards advancing within ten steps of them. All were then gathered up, put into their coffins, and buried. This is not what I have heard some one tell, but what I saw with my own eyes.

A few days after that sad affair the battle of Rocky Face Ridge began. Sherman's army moved against Johnston's and struck us at the ridge and in the valleys, east and west. Our brigade was occupying the top of the ridge, and while we were thus located there was a terrible conflict in the east valley. There seemed to be about twenty-

five thousand men on each side. This was a pretty sight, although sad. The Federals came within two hundred yards of our breastworks. The Confederates became so angry that they leaped over their breastworks and charged the Federals, driving them back about a half mile. They gave the rebel yell as they ran over the dead and wounded, upsetting and capturing ambulances. There was an awful firing of small arms, but very little artillery.

That night I was detailed for picket duty on the east side of the ridge. The Yankees would halloo to us: "O Johnnie Reb! don't roll any rocks down on us." We would reply: "All right, Billy Yank, if you don't shoot." This battle was drawing to a close, for the Federal army, outnumbering us so greatly, was about to flank us. About one o'clock that night we were withdrawn from the ridge down the eastern slope. We were so close that we were ordered not to speak above a whisper, and to hold our canteens from our hips to keep them from rattling against our bayonets.

CHAPTER IX.

RACING FOR RESACA.

SWAMP CREEK is located six or seven miles north of Resaca, and the Confederate army was pushing rapidly toward Resaca. Next day our brigade was rear guard for the army. About three o'clock in the afternoon we stopped near Swamp Creek for water. John C. Brown and his staff were sitting on their horses near the edge of the road at the head of the column. On our right came a courier riding a white horse in a gallop. Halting, he said to Gen. Brown: "General, the Yankees have been marching parallel with you for two hours." Everything seemed to be quiet in our rear at this time. Our company was ordered out as skirmishers. Presently the bugle sounded for us to deploy as skirmishers. Going through a field toward a heavy woods the bugle sounded again for us to lie down. Having been drilled with the bugle, we thoroughly understood it. I said to Ike Looney: "Listen at Henry Marshall blowing that bugle to lie down, and not a Yankee in five miles of us." Then it sounded again for us to move forward. In a minute or so a volley was fired at us from the Yankee skirmishers, wounding Bill Kemper, of my company. A large log lay in front of me, which served for my

breastworks. This was on a pretty afternoon, and the sun was now about two hours high. To my left was a large, coarse-talking man by the name of Dave Sanders, who occupied the stump my tree. Every second or so he would sing out: "Look there, boys; they're coming over there by companies! Aha! I shot him. See him fall?"

By this time we were nearly surrounded by the Federals, and it was getting dark. The skirmishers were ordered in, but I did not hear the command, and still held my position. I looked behind me and saw Col. Cook's regiment, the Thirty-Second Tennessee, advancing toward our picket lines. I jumped up and started toward them. They fired a volley at me, thinking I was a Federal skirmisher, but I kept advancing toward them. Finally I fell, and one of my comrades came to me and commanded me to surrender. I told him I was a Confederate and belonged to Company B. He said: "I know better, you are a d—d Yankee: Company B was ordered in long ago." Being dark, he could not tell, but I finally convinced him that I was not a Yankee. I then ran through the lines, shook Col. Cook by the pants, and told him he was firing on our men. He then ordered them to cease firing.

I found my regiment, and Col. Cook was ordered back by Gen. Brown, and all marched off in an eastward direction through the woods toward Resaca. A hundred or so Yankees fell in with us, thinking we were their men. They asked if we were

such and such a Federal regiment, and, knowing they were Yankees, we told them we were, and captured about one hundred and fifty prisoners. They did not know the difference until we emerged from the dark woods.

Next morning found us at Resaca. It seemed that the Federal army was trying to cut us off here, therefore we were compelled to make a stand and fight. We began fortifying and making rifle pits. We did not fight from behind our forts, but advanced beyond them, especially our brigade.

The evening of May 14 I shall never forget. Our brigade was ordered into an open field in front of our breastworks. The Yankees were occupying the heavy woods to our left. We were dressed up in line, with our banners out six spaces in front of us. Gen. Brown rode down our line and said: "Boys, when I give the command to move forward, I want every one of you to step as though your legs were hung on hinges." Just as we moved forward the sharpshooters began whistling Minie balls around us, killing several of our men, one of whom I knew—Mr John Rathey. When we had marched within one hundred and fifty yards of the enemy we did not wait for another command, but started double-quick with the rebel yell, and the Yankees flew before us, some leaving their guns, and a great many leaving their caps and knapsacks. We ran them as chaff before the wind.

Soon darkness was upon us, and we were almost surrounded by Federals, although we managed to get out, only being fired at by a few sharpshooters. We took our position at the breastworks that night, and at daybreak next morning, May 15, we were ordered back to the same field we were in the evening before; the Yankees were making for it at the same time. The field was a ridge and heavy skirt of woods. About sunrise both armies met there, and then came the bloody struggle. It lasted from daybreak until eleven o'clock that night, and was almost a hand to hand fight. There were no breastworks on either side except some rocks and chunks which we had thrown up in the morning. They charged our regiment with about seven different columns, and consequently we had to lie there, being unable to go either backward or forward. Several of our regiment were killed.

About ten o'clock a heavy duel was fought. Col. Farmer, of our regiment, received orders for us to make a charge, but as we were almost out of ammunition, a Georgia regiment, the number of which I do not remember, made the charge in our stead, losing something near two hundred and fifty men. For fifteen or twenty minutes the roar of musketry was intense. The leaves were trimmed from the trees over our heads while we were drawing our ammunition. With our fresh supply of ammunition, we took our positions behind our chunks and relieved the Georgia regiment. To our left their colors waved with ours, as they had

seized two cannons from our battery. Dark came on, and we were still holding our positions. The pitiful moans of the wounded on both sides could be heard, calling their messmates to take them from the field, exclaiming that they were bleeding to death, and asking for water. This kept up until eleven o'clock at night, and we were so close that not one on either side dared raise his head. From the sound of axes to our rear it seemed that a thousand men were chopping, building breastworks, making the Yankees think we were fortifying, and at the same time our army was crossing the river.

During the day Hood's hospital was captured by the Federal cavalry, but they were driven back and the hospital retaken by the Confederate cavalry. We fell back slowly, leaving a few men in line to make the Yankees believe we were holding our position. We were crossing a bridge and in pontoons at the same time, our regiment crossing on the railroad bridge. They found that we were crossing, and began firing at us. This was about dawn. After we had crossed the bridge they managed to cross also, and were fighting us by four o'clock in the afternoon. For seventy-one days we were not out of hearing distance of small arms. There was some heavy fighting at Cassville. Half-way between Kingston and Cassville we had another lively fight. In the afternoon there was some heavy firing of artillery from the enemy. Johnston fell back and crossed the Etowah River next day.

The next conflict was at Allatoona Pass, the desperate and bloody battle of New Hope Church. On May 23 Gen. Hardee was ordered by Gen. Johnston to march by New Hope Church to the road leading from Stilesboro through Dallas to Atlanta. Gen Hood was ordered to follow Hardee the next day. One of the most destructive battles of the war was fought here. The ground was torn up and the timber shattered. We were within fifty spaces of each other.

On the 27th our brigade was involved in another fearful skirmish at Pickett's Mill (New Hope Church). We fought here seven days and nights. One day I was sharpshooting from behind a little chinquapin oak at New Hope, and more than a hundred balls struck that tree. I considered myself fortunate to escape, for two poor fellows near me were shot, though I do not remember their names. The battle of New Hope was a terrible one. At Ringgold we also had a bloody conflict. In this battle Pat Cleburne's division did most of the deadly work. Both sides suffered severely.

Next day there was another conflict at Chickamauga Station, but we soon abandoned that point. In the afternoon the head of Sherman's column encountered the rear guard of our retreating army near Graysville, another railroad station. The fight was quite sharp, but darkness was soon upon us, and during the night the Confederates retired.



CHAPTER X.

KENNESAW MOUNTAIN.

THE battle on Kennesaw Mountain continued about two weeks. One time when I was on the skirmish line Gen. Johnston and Gen. Polk were standing on the hill looking at the situation of the Federals, and a bomb exploded which killed Gen. Polk. In less than five minutes the Federals learned of his death, and we heard them yelling and rejoicing. It was said that a few days before this one of our signal corps had deserted and gone to the Federals, and he knew what the signal flag was telegraphing. It was in this way that they learned so soon of Gen. Polk's death.

On Kennesaw's dark and bloody ground,
The dead and wounded lay;
Among them was one of our heroes—Gen. Polk—
Who left us that day

The next day about ten o'clock there was a terrible artillery duel. Shells were bursting on both sides and flying in every direction. The infantry joined in, and we had a heavy battle. Many lives were lost on both sides. Hundreds of heroes are sleeping beneath the timbers of Kennesaw, whose graves are known only to our Creator.

From Kennesaw we moved toward Marietta, Ga. There we fought five days and nights. On

the 7th of July our division was ordered from the right of the center to the left. Gen. Hooker was making a flank movement toward Marietta. The Federals now numbered about one hundred thousand, and the Confederates fifty-five thousand, so we had to shift about considerably to hold our position. By the time we encountered Gen. Hooker he was well fortified with log breastworks. We were within five hundred yards of them until two o'clock in the afternoon. Our division was drawn up in line of battle, and our company was ordered out as skirmishers. We were ordered forward by the call of the bugle, and had to go through a field to strike the enemy. A high lane fence was between us and the sharpshooters, who were in a field of green corn, and were firing at us as we advanced. Memories of that afternoon will ever remain with me. I was the first man to cross the fence into the lane, and Lieut. Bowers followed me just as I jumped over. As he jumped down he saw that I was making for the enemy, and said: "Be careful, Hampton." Just as the words were dying from his lips, the Federal skirmishers fired, a ball striking him in the forehead, killing him instantly. Our company then returned the fire, killing two of their number, and they retreated to their breastworks, with our company in close pursuit. We ran them to the edge of the woods, where there was a fence which was within a hundred yards of their line of battle. We halted there, tore the fence down, and built breastworks of it.

We were then reënforced by the remainder of our regiment, by order of Gen. John C. Brown. We lay there about an hour, while three six-gun batteries were firing on us. Their lines were in very thick woods, and their skirmishers ventured out in front of the lines, behind trees, during this heavy artillery firing.

While this was going on a man in our company by the name of Joe Crunk was cut half in two with a grapeshot. That night I helped to carry him off wrapped in a blanket upon a fence rail. Our adjutant was killed; also Lieut. Padew, who spoke to me a few minutes before his death. During this heavy firing our brigade was lying in line of battle close to the lane fence from where we started. Col. Walker, of the Third Tennessee, was killed by a bombshell.

The order came to our colonel to move our regiment forward as close to the enemy as possible. We being so close to them, our colonel gave the command of attention: "Battalion, forward, march!" This made the Yankees think there was more than one regiment of us. Behind us Stevenson's Division, to which our brigade belonged at that time, was moving forward at the same time. We did not advance more than ten steps until the pickets began firing on us. Just as I shot and was reaching around for another cartridge with which to reload two Yankees stepped from behind a tree and pointed their guns at my breast. Just as they did this I began pointing my

empty gun first at one, then at the other, and commanded them to surrender. They, thinking that my gun was loaded, surrendered, and I captured them with an empty gun. This was a desperate place. We got down in a little ravine within forty yards of the enemies' lines. We couldn't go any farther, nor could we turn back on account of so many batteries firing on us at once. Finally we killed all the cannoneers and silenced the battery that was in front of us. The other two kept firing on us, so we lay there until dark before we could get away. We lost about two hundred of our brigade. We fell back about seven hundred yards that night and threw up strong earthworks. The next night I was detailed on skirmish line. Their picket line had advanced to the old lane fence of which I have spoken. My post was at an old house where our lines were strong, and a continual firing of artillery was kept up. It seemed as though they had a spite at that old house from the way the shells were passing through it. We remained there for three or four days, under heavy fire all the time.

One day during the time we were here a man named Croxton and I were strengthening our breastworks. He was using the shovel and I the pick. Finally we got into a dispute and fell out, causing him to draw the shovel on me, while I advanced toward him with the pick. Just as I was about to strike him with the pick, Lieut. Cole came up and said: "Don't you hit him, Hamp-

ton: if you do, I'll have you put under arrest." My reply to the lieutenant was as follows: "If you will take that little stripe off your collar, you will be nothing more than a private, and no one but Sumner Cole, and I'll be N. J. Hampton; and if you say much, I'll fight you; that's what I left home for, and it's what I'll do if you don't keep your mouth shut." After that little incident the lieutenant and I were fast friends. We messed together, and he treated me as though I were his brother.



CHAPTER XI.

THE RETREAT CONTINUED.

THERE are seven or eight different places where I fought that I have not mentioned. We fought on the north side of the Chattahoochee River for five or six days and nights, during which time there was heavy bombardment of artillery and heavy skirmishing. We were compelled to vacate our position on account of the Yankees crossing the river above us. I remember that day well. It was a beautiful day. As we were crossing the river bombshells were bursting over us and forming white clouds. Five miles east of where we crossed the river our company was thrown out on picket. We had a lively skirmish across the river, which lasted until twelve o'clock that night. There was one blue fellow who hallooed across the river to us and said: "O Johnnie Reb, what is the number of your regiment?" We answered him by saying that we were Company B, of the Eighteenth Tennessee. We asked him the number of his regiment, and he told us that it was a Michigan regiment, but I have forgotten the number. The blue fellow then said: "Well, Johnnie, we're sleepy: we want to quit this foolishness for the balance of the night." We said: "All right, Billy Yank; if you will quit, we will."

He then said: "We won't fire any more the length of our regiment if you won't." Then we became very friendly up till twelve o'clock the next day. They were talking of meeting us halfway in the river with coffee to exchange for tobacco. This was in blackberry time, and the boys ventured out upon the edge of the bank to pick them. When they had coaxed as many out with their friendly talk as they could, they opened fire upon us, and killed one of our men. Meantime I did not venture out. I stayed at my post, which was a little bunch of fence rails. Just as they opened fire upon us I began firing upon them. There was one fellow behind a log who hallooed at me, saying: "O Johnnie Reb, you did not hit me that time, but you came very near it. You shot a limb off over my head." I told him that I would hit him the next time. He then put his cap on a stick and raised it above the log, though he didn't fool me. I did not shoot at it. I had heard my mother talk of Yankee tricks, and that is why I was so careful about exhibiting myself on the bank. We were relieved that night, so I didn't stand picket at that place any more.

A few days later the Federals had crossed five or six miles above us, and were hugging the banks of the river for protection. Between there and Atlanta we had another skirmishing battle which lasted four or five days. We fought hard against them, but they outflanked us, owing to their outnumbering us. The next place we fought was at

Peach Tree Creek, near the suburbs of Atlanta. We had a desperate battle there. Gen. McPherson and the Confederate General Walker were killed in the heavy battle of July 22, 1864, between Atlanta and Decatur. We then fell back to Atlanta, where our strong fortifications were, but they did us little good—we fought mostly out from behind them. When we fell back to that position, the Federals followed close behind us and were firing on us by sunup the next morning. They ran a battery out in an old field and began firing at us, as though we were nothing but cornstalks. By and by we made it so hot for them that they had to run off and leave the battery, so that it remained unused by either army during the battle. The next day Gen. Cheatham and his staff rode along by us Tennesseans and said: “You Tennesseans listen up here on your left; we’re going to have some music directly.” He was fixing to charge out with his division. Then we gave him a cheer, and that drew the attention of the Federal battery men, and they opened fire upon him and his staff. At this time he was in the rear of our company. A shell burst within ten feet of the General, and he hardly batted his eyes. I was a witness to this, and not only this, but everything I relate. His division did charge, but it was not a success to our army. There were about six hundred men killed, wounded, and captured.

A few days later our brigade was ordered to the

center My company rested directly across Peach Tree Street, where strong earthworks and field battery fortifications were thrown up. We remained there three or four days. About the 26th or 27th of July an order came one evening from Gen. Hood for the entire Confederate batteries, which numbered between three and four hundred, to turn loose. We turned loose about four o'clock, and it was the most terrific roar of artillery a human ever listened to. Among the batteries were some heavy siege guns. It seemed like the earth was in a tremble.

A few days after that our division was moved to the left of the center, near the Atlanta railroad, where we had an engagement. The last duty I did at Atlanta was when twenty-two of my company were detailed to go out on skirmish line, I being one of them. I well remember the last rations I drew at Atlanta. They consisted of three raw Irish potatoes, a quarter of a pound of bacon, and a dodger of corn bread with the bran in it and no salt. I would eat but little of it that night, for I wanted to save it for the next morning, knowing I would be out there all day. After all my saving a big Yankee took it away from me.

That night we advanced our picket posts within three hundred yards of the Federal earthworks. In the early part of the night we were fired upon very often. Midnight brought more quietness. It was very calm from midnight until about day-break. We occupied a western hillside in an old

field surrounded by a few small bushes. At day-break the bugles were blown as usual. I began surveying the front, and, as I did so, I saw a line of battle about twenty steps in front of us. I remarked: "Boys, the Yankees are right on us." Ike Looney, one of my comrades, said: "Why, Hampton, it's nothing but a stone fence." I said: "I never saw a stone fence walk." I was the first one to raise my gun and fire at them. Just as I did so I began reloading to fire again, and by the time I fired they were right at me with their bayonets. We had a hand to hand bayonet fight for half an hour. There were three striking at me with their bayonets, besides an officer who struck at me with his sword. Luckily for me, I escaped uninjured and fought desperately with the butt of my gun and my bayonet. One aimed at me to shoot me, finding his bayonet did not prove successful. As he aimed I ran to him, gave his gun a side lick with my own, and knocked it off of me as he fired, the bullet taking effect on Frank Allen. I have seen the wound hundreds of times since. Mr Allen resides at Nashville, Tenn., now. On each side of me our skirmish lines were surrendering. A big, double-listed Yankee jumped at me, at the same time clinching my coat collar. Two others drew their guns on me and commanded me to throw my gun down. A big bomb from one of our siege guns burst near us, knocking down several of them. As the shell burst the big Yankee started off with me to their breastworks,



GEN. GIDEON J. PILLOW.

my feet scarcely touching the ground. When he arrived at their breastworks with me he was panting for breath, and there was where I was relieved of my dodger of corn bread, three potatoes, and my little piece of meat. By this time they had about three hundred of our men whom they had taken prisoners. They were marching them in double-quick, and I got up and fell in line with them. An officer came by and asked the Yankee that had taken me prisoner if he was not one of the details. He said he was, and the officer then said: "Well, get back to the front then, and that quick, too." I guess the poor fellow was killed who probably saved my own life. They took us to Gen. Sherman's headquarters and counted us off, also taking our names several times. I gave my name different every time.

About nine o'clock the Confederates recaptured the picket posts, over which there was considerable fighting. We remained at Sherman's headquarters till the next day. About twelve o'clock the same day an officer came among us with six guards looking for the young man that shot and killed one of their men after all the Confederates had surrendered. I was the one they were looking for; but the fellow who captured me was dead, and there was no one to recognize me except my comrades, and they thought too much of me to betray me. They did not find me out. The next day they started us to Chattanooga on our way to the starving Camp Chase, at Columbus, Ohio.

CHAPTER XII.

CARRIED TO CAMP CHASE.

ON arriving at Chattanooga we were penned up like hogs in an old brick house without a floor. They hauled water for us in barrels from the Tennessee River. The next morning we marched to the depot and took a train to Nashville. When we arrived at the Chattanooga depot in Nashville, we were marched to the east gate of the capitol grounds and there halted. We were counted off and our names taken again. This time I gave my correct name: N. J. Hampton. While we were standing there in line an old lady and a colored man bearing a sack of apples approached us, the apples belonging to the old lady. She knew we had been standing there in the hot sun a good while and that we were tired and hungry, and she intended the apples for us. Just as she approached our lines a Yankee officer seized her by the shoulders and pushed her back, jerked the sack of apples from the colored man's grasp, and emptied them out among the Yankees. We tried to get a few of them, but were kept back by their bayonets. They marched us from there to the penitentiary, and put us in an adjoining pen. The day was hot and sultry and perfectly clear, and we were nearly famished for water. Some of

the boys were praying that it might cloud up and rain. I thought that simple, as clear as it was, but sure enough about nine o'clock a black cloud rose in the northwest. It rained so hard that the water was running ankle-deep on the ground. Some of us had oilcloths that we used for ground blankets; we would hold them up and catch water in them. Then we were bountifully supplied with water. About two o'clock the guards came in with their lanterns and aroused us, and we fell in line and marched to Linck's depot, there to take the cars for Camp Chase. When we reached College Street it seemed as though the mud was knee-deep. The guards occupied the sidewalks and we the street. When we reached the depot, we were put into box cars, fifty men to a car. We were soaking wet, and all the sleep we got was from that time and daylight. We didn't leave Nashville until sunup the next morning. When we reached Edgefield Junction I was within ten miles of my home, nearer than I had been in four years. The next morning we arrived at Louisville. During the night some of the boys cut a hole in the floor of the car and made their escape. When we arrived at Louisville we were put into pens, and as we went into the gate they made us drop our knives in a box, for fear more of us would escape. That caused them to count us over again. In the evening we crossed the river on a ferryboat to Jeffersonville, Ind., to take a train for Camp Chase. When we reached Cincinnati we had to walk about

half a mile to change cars. During that walk we were rocked and jeered at by women and children. They were shouting, "Reb! Reb! Reb!" etc. The next point was the dreadful, miserable Camp Chase. They put me in Barracks No. 5. There were about a hundred to a barracks. Here I have a good deal to say, but words fail to express the horrible condition of things.

In three days after we arrived there they cut our rations down, and I came very near starving. Some of us had money sent to us, but were not allowed to buy anything except tobacco and postage stamps. I didn't see enough grease during the whole six months I stayed there to grease a pair of shoes. The only meat we got was a small piece of beef with all the fat trimmed off. Just for one day's rations we would only draw a fifth of a loaf of bread—one loaf for five men. I could have eaten a whole loaf at one meal, although I didn't get but one fifth for a whole day. We boiled our beef and made tea of it.

On Saturday evening we would draw meal, and then we wouldn't draw anything else until nine o'clock Monday morning. I would eat my little allowance up before nine o'clock Saturday night, and do without until Monday. We had slippery elm wood principally with which to build fires. At eight o'clock the drum would tap, and we had to extinguish our lights and shut the stoves up. We only had one ax to a barracks, but we kept that ax going until we chopped all the bark off the

wood. We had to eat the bark to keep from starving. This condition lasted for six months. We were in the habit of cleaning our streets off once a day. A comrade and I were cleaning the streets one day, and found two old shank bones in a trash pile. We were so hungry that we took the bones, broke them up and put them into an old camp kettle, and boiled them. After they were boiled, we took our fingers and skimmed the grease off and ate it.

Occasionally we would draw beans, but would have to save them up about three weeks in order to have enough to make soup. At one time our supply of beans was so small that each man drew only seven beans. I parched my seven on the stove and ate them.

Barracks No. 2 drew such a small piece of beef that they wouldn't divide it out, but hung it up and bleated at it for a day or two. They kept up such a noise that the officers threatened to fire in on them, and cut that barracks off two days without anything to eat. The prison had a dead line, a trench dug about eight feet from the fence, and we were dared to cross it. When we went out at night we had to go in our night clothes, to keep from being shot by the guards. At that time it was very cold, the snow being two feet deep. That was about the time Gen. Hood was in Nashville.

We petitioned to the general in command of the camp to sell us a bushel of meal to make mush of

for Christmas, but he refused to let us have it. I have forgotten the general's name.

We had a tough time at Camp Chase. A great many of our men died of the smallpox, as high as thirty being sent to the pesthouse in one day. The most fun I witnessed during my stay there was about a bread thief. The boys were so hungry they would steal each other's bread. Finally they got so bad that one of them had to be reported. The Yankees took him and put his head through a hole at the top of a barrel, and his arms through holes at the sides, and then wrote on both the back and front of the barrel in large letters: "Bread thief." They then marched him around the prison a time or two and put him on a barrel and gave him a stovepipe to talk through and made him cry out: "O ves, Johnnie Reb, run here and see the thief that stole your bread last night." This was great fun for the Federals.

Very soon after they agreed to exchange prisoners. That was about the 15th of February, 1865. We went from there to Richmond, Va., by way of Baltimore, across the Chesapeake Bay, then up the James River, being out of sight of land for three days and nights. A very amusing incident occurred on that voyage. One of the Yankee guards struck at one of our men with his bayonet. There were about three hundred Texas rangers on board with us, and they formed a line of battle, threatening to throw every Yankee overboard and run the vessel ashore on the Virginia side. We

outnumbered them that time, for there were about twenty-two hundred of us and about one hundred of them. They treated us well after that. Going across Chesapeake Bay we got out of bread. They stopped at Fortress Monroe and supplied us with bread. We then started for the mouth of James River and went up as far as Acorn's Landing, about twelve or fifteen miles below Richmond. Then we were transferred to Confederate boats. The Confederates had James River pretty well supplied with torpedoes. They were all taken up but one, and it was misplaced. A day or two before we landed a Confederate boat ran upon one of the torpedoes, resulting in the destruction of the boat and the killing of the entire crew and one of the exchange agents. When we were passing Missouri Bluff it looked almost impossible for a Federal boat to pass—we could see cannon up the river for five miles.

In a few hours we landed at Richmond, Va., the old Confederate capital, and were paroled for thirty days, provided we were not exchanged before that time was up. As it happened we were exchanged in eight days. The Virginia boys took advantage of their parole and went home, but as my home was in Tennessee I spent the time in Richmond at Camp Lee, during which time I saw something of Gen. Lee. He was fond of mingling with his soldiers and always had an eye to their welfare. While there I heard Jeff Davis make a very fine speech to the soldiers. I drew my six

months' pay, fifty dollars bounty, and a uniform while in Richmond.

I visited Camp Lee in 1897, and it is in a solid city now. I also visited many places of interest in Richmond, including the Jefferson hotel, which is said to be one of the finest hotels in the United States, and the police station, which cost a hundred thousand dollars. Everything about Richmond is changed now except the James River and the old Confederate capitol, the tower of which I visited twice.

During my parole I went to Lynchburg, Va., then to Dublin, Va., and then to Jefferson, N. C., at Negro Mountain. While at the last named place I read in the paper that we were exchanged. Not being able to get to my regular command, which was under Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, I temporarily joined Capt. Lefferwell's cavalry troop, which was making its way to Georgia. We mounted our horses and went to Chimney Rock, N. C., and then over the Blue Ridge, where we joined Price's cavalry.

One morning we met the Federal cavalry in the road, and had a very lively time for a few minutes. It was a place about twenty-five miles from Jeffersonville, Ga. They were out foraging, taking from the citizens all the bacon and corn that they could pack into their wagons, leaving some of the citizens crying. We hustled them away from there in a hurry. We went back to Jeffersonville, and found that the Federals had captured the city and

burned the jail. The Federal officer said he burned the jail, fearing we might capture him and put him in it. We were making our way to Georgia to rejoin our command with Johnston. During that time three of us were detailed to cross the river to a mill and get some meal. While we were gone a waterspout caused the river to suddenly rise about fifteen feet. I had to swim over the tops of willow trees, and came near drowning. Drifts of whole trees were floating down the river. In our travels we would find out from the citizens when the Federals were coming our way, and would flank them on account of the smallness of our number.

I remember once when eight of us were out foraging, we called at a house to get dinner. When dinner was ready I was somewhat surprised to hear the young lady say they would have to dig up their dishes before dinner was served. They had buried them in the garden to keep them from the Yankees. Some of us stood guard while the others ate dinner. On our return we met a yoke of oxen and two boys. One of the oxen became sullen, and lay down. I told the boys to fill his nostrils with mud: they did so, and he got up immediately. They said, "You're a doctor:" and after that they called me "Dr. Hampton."

During our long journey the Federals were pushing us so closely that when we came to a certain river all of us rode in and swam across. How deep it was, I do not know. We landed in the



SAM DAVIS.

woods and continued on our way to Ellijay. We arrived in the city of Ellijay on the 1st day of May. Upon our arrival we found that Johnston's army had surrendered. We went from there to Kingston, where Gen. Wofford was in command of a small garrison. The Federal authorities had sent him word to hold his men there until the 12th of May, and they would parole them. He held our cavalry squad also, and would not allow us to leave camp without a guard. A fellow named Ledbetter and I decided that we could better ourselves by going to the country, so I asked the lieutenant to furnish a guard to go with us to the country to hunt some buttermilk. When we had gotten about two miles from camp I suddenly seized the guard's gun, taking it from him. This frightened him very much, but I told him not to be alarmed: that I was not going to stay with Wofford's men until the 12th, as I could beat that in the country. I took the cap off his gun and told him I would lay the gun down when I got fifty yards down the road, and that he could go back and tell them he shot me if he wanted to. Ledbetter darted into the woods and I followed him, but soon coaxed him into the road again. We found a place to board without money or price until the 12th of May, in a home where there were two pretty young girls. I never saw Kingston again until the 12th. I was a mile beyond our limits, and had to keep a keen lookout for the Yankees.

Mr and Mrs. Smith, the people with whom I stayed, treated me as if I had been one of their own children. One of the young ladies, Miss Linie Smith, was also especially nice to me. One day while there Miss Linie and I were sitting in the room talking, and presently two Yankee cavalrymen rode up to the fence and called. Mrs. Smith met them on the porch. Meanwhile the girl was begging me to hide in the closet. I refused to hide, and the girl seized a large pistol, and buckling it around her waist, said: "Ma, if those Yankees come in here, I'll shoot them, so help me, God!" Luckily they did not come in. They were out looking for buttermilk, and Mrs. Smith told them she did not have any, although she had plenty of it.

Twenty-eight years afterwards I visited the same place—the Smith residence. Mrs. Smith had passed into that sleep that knows no waking until God bids her awake. Mr Smith was very feeble, and Miss Linie was still single. I shall never forget when I bade them farewell. I was on my way home, where I had not been for four years. The day we left there we walked nearly forty miles on the railroad, which was torn up. When darkness overtook us we lay down by the roadside and slept until morning. We then walked to Dalton, where we secured transportation from the Federal government to Chattanooga. There a train was made up, and six or seven hundred paroled soldiers started for Nashville. Bidding our old comrades

farewell as they stopped at the various places on our way home was an experience that filled our hearts with sadness. They were men I shall see no more on earth—men that stood with me in the bloody line of battle, their shoes painted with the patriotic blood of our heroes.

When we arrived at the Union Depot in Nashville it was about one o'clock in the afternoon, and there was a train to leave Nashville at two o'clock, for Goodlettsville, which was within nine miles of my home, but I was so anxious to get home that I started on foot. When within seven miles of home, and darkness began to surround me, I stopped at Mr. Savely's, in Millersville, who saddled a couple of horses and took me home. It was one o'clock when we reached our destination. My mother was awake and heard us coming, but hearing the tramp of the horses, thought we were bushwhackers. When I called she knew my voice and met me at the door. It was a happy meeting. I was still her boy, for I was only twenty and a half years old. This was the night of May 18, 1865. I had served four years and twelve days in the army, was in sixteen battles, and answered to my name every roll call. During the four years I served I was never put on extra duty, was always on hand to take part in many of the bloody battles of the war, and was a great favorite among all the officers and privates.

The night I reached home I slept only one hour, and that was on a pallet. Next day my mother

presented me with a suit of clothes, and I was once more a citizen of the United States. Three days later I went to work for Esq. Jim Thornhill, who now resides at Eldorado Springs, Robertson County, Tenn. I always fancied work. My present occupation is engineer for the Indiana Lumber Company, of Nashville, Tenn., by which company I have been employed for twenty-one years. The proprietor, F. M. Hamilton, is as kind to me as if I were a brother, and is a Northern man who fought on the opposite side.

For several months after I came home I would never get to sleep before midnight, for my mother and others of the family would gather around my bed and listen to me tell of my hardships and the awful scenes I witnessed until I would fall asleep.

Very soon I began thinking of marrying a little girl with whom I played when we were children together. In our play I would often tell her I would marry her when we were grown, and after I came home, sure enough, we were married. Her name was Parthenia Hunnicutt, and when we were married, September 14, 1865, she was only fifteen years old. She was as pretty as a little rose, and is not ugly yet. We are still living together, this August 8, 1898.

I will conclude this book with a few letters I wrote to my dear parents while I was in the service. Yet I have not told one-third.

LETTERS.

CAMP BUTLER, ILL., May 19, 1862.

Mr. Noah Hampton.

Dear Father: I have just this day received your kind and interesting letter dated May 7, and was pleased to learn that you and mother are enjoying good health, as are also the remainder of my dear relations. I am happy to inform you that I am tolerably well at present. I was pleased to know you are done planting corn and farming as usual.

I am sorry it is not in my power to be at home and assist you in your old age, but I am in hope it will not be long before we will be together again. I haven't any news of importance to communicate at present. We are all well and enjoying ourselves as well as we can. We have plenty to eat and are treated very well, and I think we will be at home soon, as we would like to be, and enjoy ourselves.

Give my love to Sister Lucy, Brother Wesley, Jim Bell, and all the rest of the family. Write often. Ben Hampton and Jim Swift are well and send their love. Mr. Meyers sends his best regards and would like to see you very much. He says he is going to keep me all right and make a man of me.

Your obedient son,

NOAH J. HAMPTON

Here are a few lines a friend of mine, Mr Meyers, wrote in my behalf:

My object in writing you this is to inform you that Jasper is a good boy and often speaks of his father and mother and the rest of his folks and would like to be at home very much to help you. Please write often, as we all like to hear from you. I am sorry we are so far away that you cannot visit us. Write soon and all particulars.

BEN F MEYERS.

When I wrote this letter I thought I would be home soon, although it was three years afterwards when I returned to see my dear people and friends. When I returned my dear father had passed away and my dear old mother was left to grieve alone.

Here is another letter I wrote my parents. I would publish the letters I received from my parents if I had them.

CAMP BUTLER, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.,

Sept. 6, 1862.

My Dear Father and Mother: I received your most kind and welcome letter a few days ago, and was very glad to hear you were all well, and I hope when these few lines reach you they will find you all well and enjoying yourselves. Mother, this will be the last letter you will get from me from this place, as I will leave here Sunday for the South. I do not know when I will be at home, but I will come the first chance I get, so you need

not look for me until you see me. I will close by sending my best respects to you all. Farewell.

JASPER HAMPTON.

RUSSELLVILLE, KY., Feb. 1, 1862.

Dear Mother: I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well at present and hope these lines will find you all enjoying the same blessing. I received your kind letter the 24th of January, and it gave me great pleasure to hear from you all. We are still at Russellville, Ky. I want you to write to me as soon as you get this letter. No more at present. I still remain your loving son until death.

JASPER HAMPTON

To Phoebe Hampton.

CAMP BUTLER, ILL., May 28, 1862.

N. Hampton, Springfield, Tenn.

Dear Father: Conformably with my wishes as well as your own, I will again attempt to write you a few lines, however uninteresting they may be.

I received your most interesting and welcome letter dated May 7th a few days ago. It was brief, but contained much interesting news to me. I afforded me much pleasure—more than I can say—and I only wish they would come oftener, as this is the only one I have received from you since my imprisonment.

In regard to my health—and knowledge of my

health will be of the utmost importance to you—I write as one who enjoys good health, tastes its sweets, knows its value, and ever holds it sacred above all other blessings. I am well located, much better than I ever anticipated, but a release soon would be much more gratifying than all of their good treatment. Alas! I can see no basis on which to place my hopes for a speedy release. We are here for the war, let it be of long or short duration. I must close. Write immediately after receiving this. Give my love to all the family and to all inquiring friends. I still remain your dutiful and affectionate son, JASPER HAMPTON.

POSTSCRIPT BY I. SWIFT.

Dear Father: I was greatly rejoiced to hear from home, but saddened by hearing of the death of my baby and the baby of my mother. I am well at present and have been in good health ever since I have been here. I hope this will find you and my family enjoying the same. Uncle Noah, I would like very much to be at home this beautiful and pleasant evening and go squirrel hunting with you once more. I often think of the times when we used to hunt together.

Aunt Phœbe, you must not make yourself uneasy about Jasper and me. We expect to be at home some time—if not on earth, let it be in a better world.

Yours, etc.,

I. SWIFT

POSTSCRIPT BY WILLIAM HULCEY

Dear Mother: I am tolerably well at present, and have enjoyed good health since my imprisonment, and hope you are enjoying the same. Mother, I have never received a letter from home. Why don't some of you write? I have written several times. Write. Write.

To Mrs. Lucy Hulcey from her son, William Hulcey

CAMP CHASE, Oct. 20, 1864. ..

Dear Mother: I take the present opportunity of writing to you, to let you know how I am getting along. I am only tolerably well at this time. I write every week, and have not received but one letter from you since I have been here. I received a letter from Sister Nancy several weeks ago, which I answered. When you write again let me know where to direct your letters. I have directed them to Mitchellsville and Nashville, and I don't know which is the best place to direct them.

I wrote to Brother Wesley a few days ago, and sent an order for some clothing and some bed-clothing, which I need very much and suffer for the want of. Please send them on quickly, for I need them very badly. Give my love to all the family and tell them to write.

Direct my letters to Prison No. 3, Barracks No. 5, Camp Chase, Ohio. Nothing more at present.

I remain as ever your affectionate son,

JASPER HAMPTON. ..



